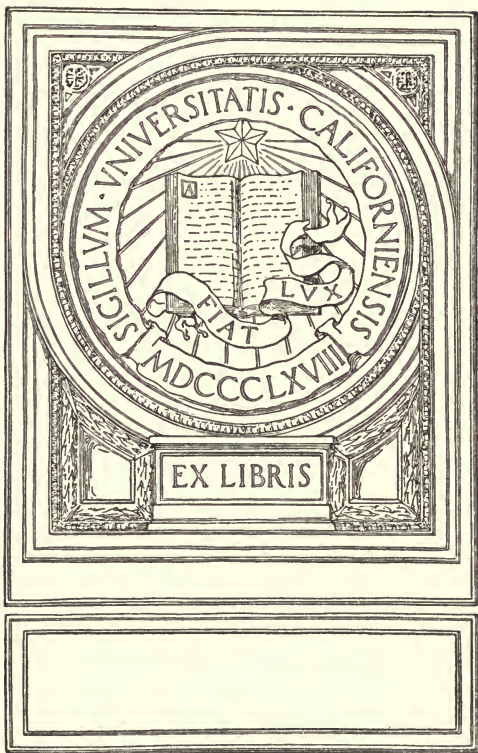


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A

DISCOURSE,

Before

THE *SOCIETY* FOR
PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL AMONG THE
INDIANS, AND OTHERS, IN
NORTH AMERICA.

DELIVERED

On the 1st of November, 1804.

—●—
Br REV. LEVI FRISBIE, A.M.

Pastor of the First Church in Ipswich.

—●—
Charlestown :

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1804.

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AT a meeting of the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and others in North America, on the first of November, 1804.

Voted, That the Rev. Dr. LATHROP, the Rev. Dr. ELIOT, and the Rev. Dr. ECKLEY, be a Committee, to return the thanks of the Society to the Rev. Mr. FRISBIE for his excellent Sermon, delivered before them this day, and to request a copy of it for the press.

..... JEDIDIAH MORSE, *Secretary*.

DISCOURSE, &c.

ACTS VIII. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them ; And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits crying with a loud voice came out of many that were possessed with them ; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed : And there was great joy in that city.

THE changes, which take place in the condition and character of cities and nations, are wonderful ! While the people of Jerusalem despise and persecute the gospel of Christ ; the Samaritans receive it with thankfulness and joy ! They were a people of a strange original, and a singular character : memorable for their error and duplicity in

religion, for their numerous immoralities, and for various calamitous revolutions. They were, at this time, involved in ignorance, sinfulness, and guilt ; afflicted with demons and diseases, and infatuated with the distracting enchantments of Simon the forcerer. Philip, by the truth and power of the gospel, presented and applied an effectual remedy to all their disorders. He poured light upon their benighted minds, hope and peace into their guilty hearts ; dispensed health and comfort to their diseased bodies, liberty from tormenting demons, and from the delusions of an impious impostor. They had therefore abundant reasons for transports of joy.

BUT were *they* the only people whose natural and moral disorders required the healing power of the gospel, or who were filled by its salutary light and influence with emotions of great joy ? By no means. They were but an epitome of mankind ; an affecting example of the deplorable condition of the whole human race. And their joy was but a specimen of the joy of every person, family, and people, who believe the truth, and receive the blessings of the gospel of peace. For GOD has designed and adapted

this gospel to be a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel. To be glad tidings of great joy to *all* people; to proclaim peace upon earth, and the divine good will to man, to the remotest ends of the world.

THE subject, therefore, naturally suggested by the text, to our serious consideration, is this :

THAT the gospel of salvation must prove a source of great joy to all who cordially hear, understand, and receive it.

THE gospel is capable of producing great joy, because it is designed and adapted to deliver us from grievous and complicated evils, and to confer upon us the enjoyment of precious and everlasting benefits. And to illustrate the truth of our doctrine, it may be useful to consider,

Ist. THE evils, from which the gospel is suited and intended to deliver us. And,

IIdly, THE blessings which it promises and communicates to all those, who cordially receive it.

Ist. THE evils, from which the gospel is adapted and designed to deliver the sinful children of men, are, that ignorance, sinfulness, guilt, and misery, which had over-

spread all the nations of the earth. They had lost the knowledge of the living God, of themselves, of their duty, their dignity, and happiness, and had sunk into a deplorable state of spiritual delusion, slavery, and death. There was indeed a time, when mankind were acquainted with their Maker ;^a* when they beheld the face of God in the mirror of his works ; but such was the depraved disposition of their hearts, that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were they thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened ; and, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. When we read the first chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, how are we afflicted and disgusted with the dismal picture, which he has there given of the human, and especially of the Roman character and condition ? And when we consult the testimonies of contemporary authors, how are we surprised to find them drawing the same picture of deformity with features so exceedingly similar ?^b How soon did mankind rebel against the voice of nature, of reason, and of the gracious and awful dispensations of Providence ? The earth was overspread with wickedness ;

* See Notes at the end.

it was overwhelmed with a flood ; but the deluge did not wash away the iniquity and pollution of the human heart ! Men rapidly degenerated into error, idolatry, and sin. The reason was, they did not like to retain God in their knowledge. The infinite purity and splendor of his majesty were too dazzling for their weak and distempered sight. His laws, and worship were too strict and holy to meet the approbation of their perverted minds. Therefore they invented gods more sensible, more congenial and indulgent to their imaginations and appetites. And, having transferred to these fictitious deities the passions and vices of depraved humanity, they honoured and worshipped them with rites and offerings correspondent to their characters, and to the corrupted and bewildered sentiments and propensities of their own hearts. For the character, the government, and the laws of such gods they could have no cordial veneration. They sometimes trembled before them, and attempted to appease their anger with costly victims and cruel sacrifices ; but how often, when they were not successful, was their slavish terror converted into impious repining, insult, and contempt ? Ignorant of God,

they neither knew nor revered their own natures as subjects of dignified, rational, and immortal spirits. Having no ideas of an immortal existence, or of future rewards and punishments, but such as were confused, fabulous, and extravagant, they felt and assumed a liberty of plunging into all kinds of injustice, treachery, and violence.

BUT it is possible that the dreary picture which has been drawn of the gentile state and character, however warranted by ancient history and modern observation, will not be permitted to pass for a just likeness of the whole heathen world.

LET it then be acknowledged that the learning, the policy, the patriotism, liberty, and virtue of the Greeks and Romans have been admired and celebrated, by the historians, poets, and orators of all ages ; yet in the enlightened view of true philosophy and religion, how greatly is their glory obscured and degraded ? Their boasted patriotism and love of liberty, what were they better, except in a few instances, than a restless, insatiable lust of advancing and establishing their own personal and national wealth, grandeur, and glory, upon the subjection and slavery of all surrounding nations ? If, in the early stages

of their republics, they were distinguished by more liberal and generous sentiments, yet in proportion as they rose in power, riches, and greatness, they sunk in probity and virtue ; until, by their pride, licentiousness, and faction, they had sacrificed their liberty and independence to emperors and tyrants, and exhibited to all nations and ages an example of a still more wretched slavery to the sordid and imperious passions of riot, luxury, cruelty, and wickedness. Nothing less had been sufficient to satisfy their ambition than absolute dominion over all the nations of the earth ; and, by their attempts to accomplish this extravagant project, and the improvement they made of their conquests, they deluged the world with blood, and tormented its inhabitants with infinite mischiefs and miseries,

AND what was their philosophy but an incoherent system of pompous speculations, embellished indeed with some scattered rays of truth, but corrupted and obscured by predominant shades of error, sophistry, and arrogance ?

THEIR virtue was a stranger to humility ; an alien from true love to God and benevolence to man ; it was the offspring of pride,

subtilty, and a thirst of glory. It had not, even with the assistance of all their philosophy and refinement, either the will or the ability to enlighten and reform the body of the people, to purify their religion, or amend their hearts, but left them under the full dominion of polytheism and idolatry, and suffered their services and rites of worship to remain corrupted and deformed by all the detestable extravagance, impurity, and superstition, of the most barbarous pagans.

IF we attend to the nation of the Jews ; they had received from heaven the lively oracles of GOD, which taught them his perfections, his worship, and his will, and the principles and benefits of private and public wisdom, virtue, and happiness ; but they deserted their GOD, corrupted their religion, and became slaves to the power of their crimes and their enemies ; and, having lost all just ideas of the character and design of their long predicted Messiah, they expected him, not as a Saviour from the bondage and misery of sin, but as a prince and a hero, who would conduct them to liberty, conquest, and glory above all the nations of the earth. When therefore the Saviour appeared, detected and condemned that ignorance,

pride, hypocrify, and wickedness, which had polluted and degraded all ranks and ages of people, they were exasperated to rage, and malice against him ; they vilified, persecuted, and finally murdered him by a most painful and ignominious execution. And now the sun of righteousness seemed to have set forever, and all mankind to be involved in a gloomy night of ignorance, delusion, wickedness, and death ; from which it was impossible, they could arise into light, liberty, and happiness, without the interposition of the infinite power and mercy of God. These divine perfections *did* interpose for the instruction and salvation of a perishing world. Which leads us to consider, in the

II^d PLACE, the blessings which the gospel, the medium of this divine interposition, promises and communicates to all who cordially receive it, and so proves to them, as our doctrine asserts, a source of exceeding great joy. And it proves such a source, because, in the

Ist PLACE, it reveals to them the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God, who came into the world to heal the disorders, and expel the miseries of mankind ; to give light to the gentiles, life and salvation to the ends

of the earth. To accomplish this great and benevolent end his incarnation, doctrines, miracles, sufferings, resurrection, and ascension into glory ; the effusions of his Spirit, the preaching of his apostles and ministers, were all designed and adapted : they declared, they exemplified, the adorable perfections and government of God, that assemblage of majesty and mercy, dignity and condescension, holiness and grace, which unite in the divine character and works. They taught mankind the knowledge of their relation and obligation to God, as their creator, benefactor, and friend. They instructed them in the knowledge of the dignity and destination of their immortal natures, the depravity and ruin to which they were degraded by sin, their accountableness to God, the resurrection of their bodies, their appearance at his righteous tribunal, and their final consignment to endless happiness, or misery, according to their works.

BUT could these solemn truths prove a source of joy to guilty criminals ? No ; they were intended primarily to rouse their attention, to alarm their consciences, and to impress their minds with an effectual conviction of their sinfulness and guilt ; and of

that gulf of darkness and perdition into which their sins were plunging them headlong. Such a conviction alone can render men duly sensible of their absolute need of an Almighty Saviour. For if they are not sufficiently convinced of the greatness and malignity of their moral disorders, and their want of all merit to atone for them, or power to remove them, how can they possibly be sensible of the necessity of an all perfect Physician ; or perceive, in the provision of such a Physician, the display of divine wisdom, holiness, and grace ? And if it contains no display of these perfections, it bears not the signature of God, it is not distinguished from a system of imposture and deceit. Those, therefore, who would effectually examine the divine original of the gospel, must bring to this examination a mind impressed with a sense of sin, and of the necessity of a method of salvation by unmerited grace ; otherwise, it is a wonder if their prejudices, and their pre-attachment to the deluding enjoyments of the world, do not impel them to view this gospel with such doubt and indifference, as will finally degenerate into infidelity and contempt.

THE pagans were not totally destitute of this kind of preparation for the belief and reception of the gospel of peace. For, however deeply they were involved in the gloom of ignorance and wickedness, yet they derived from nature and tradition some gleams of salutary light, by which they were made partially and painfully sensible of the disorder and misery into which they had fallen. Their consciences did not wholly forbear to reproach them for their unnatural and atrocious crimes, and to assure them "that those, who commit such things are worthy of death." For that sense of the intimate connection there is between the works and wages of iniquity, which the God of nature has implanted in the human breast, is seldom totally obliterated by all the stupifying power of ignorance and vice. Hence their strange and costly offerings, their human victims, their sacrifice of friendly and filial blood, to appease the anger of their gods. But when the gospel shone upon them, it discovered to them in the strongest light, their sin, their danger, and their remedy; and caused them at once both to tremble and rejoice. While it unveiled to their view that threefold chain of ignorance, wicked-

ness, and guilt, by which they were bound, it revealed the hand, which was both able and willing to burst it asunder; the hand which was stretched out to give sight to the blind, healing and liberty to the wounded, broken hearted, captive. By the energy of its light and power it dissipated their darkness and delusion, expelled their idols and demons, silenced their lying oracles, confounded their magicians, and discovered to their deluded votaries the falsehood and arrogance of their impious devices and presumptuous pretensions; and thus exhibited with the brightest evidence, the dignity, excellence, and glory of him, who was indeed the mighty power of God.

And if the operations of the spirit and truth of the gospel have been less powerful, rapid, and wonderful in succeeding ages, yet they have been substantially the same, and have produced similar effects among the ignorant and deluded pagans and savages both in Asia and America. Witness the testimonies of an Eliot, a Mayhew, a Brainard, and of many others, who have laboured with pious courage and zeal in these wild and stubborn regions of God's husbandry. As all have sinned and destroyed themselves,

and the whole world, both barbarous and civilized, is become guilty before God, therefore to *every one*, who effectually understands and believes the gospel, it must become a source of powerful conviction and contrition, and of pure and substantial joy. How is it possible it should be otherwise? For, while it discovers to them their deplorable ignorance, their aggravated offences, the wrath of God revealed from heaven against their unrighteousness, and ungodliness, and fills them with awful apprehensions of endless darkness and perdition, it does, at the same time, reveal to their admiring view the boundless compassion of God, and the perfect suitability and all-sufficiency of his Son Jesus Christ. It offers him to their acceptance as a Saviour and advocate of infinite dignity, merit, and mercy; who, by his obedience and death has obtained for sinners a complete and everlasting salvation: a salvation consisting in the full pardon of numerous and aggravated offences; in peace and acceptance with God, adoption into his family, deliverance from the dominion and pollution of sin, and an interest in all the grace and assistance necessary to a steady perseverance in faith and holiness to the end of life: a salvation commencing with

hope, peace, and purity, and terminating in the final enjoyment of everlasting blessedness and perfection, in the kingdom of glory.

WE observe 2dly, that when christians consider the evil principles and propensities of their nature, and feel their total inability to maintain a course of lively faith and obedience in opposition to that numerous host of enemies and temptations, which surround them, and watch for their destruction, they must greatly rejoice in that ample provision, which is made in the gospel for their direction, support, and preservation : a provision, which proposes and promises the Son of GOD for the all-powerful and gracious captain of their salvation, engages to give and continue to them the instructions and influences of his holy Spirit, to guide, defend, and comfort them in their wearisome and dangerous pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world ; and to conduct them to a crown of life, a mansion of rest, and a triumph of glory in the heavenly Cănaan.

3dly. WHAT assistance and satisfaction do they derive from divine ordinances ? These are the clouds which distill the heavenly manna ; precious mediums of spiritual inter-

course with GOD, of the manifestation of his perfections, the communications of his grace, and of offering up to him the sacrifices of holy worship and heavenly affection. These ordinances, they are persuaded, are of the highest importance to propagate truth, to promote virtue and holiness, and to maintain a sense of GOD and religion in the hearts of their children, their friends, and their fellow-citizens ; and that nothing can, therefore, aim a more deadly blow at the civil and moral purity, dignity, and happiness of a people, than a bold or insidious attempt to render their religious institutions and ordinances, objects of neglect, contempt, and rejection.

THEREFORE, 4thly, the gospel must be a source of joy to all sincere christian patriots, on account of its powerful influence to promote and secure the order and happiness of society. Virtue, consisting in justice, integrity, and benevolence, is the soul of an harmonious, and well regulated community ; the vital, attractive, principle, which animates and unites all its members. But it might be as wisely expected that grapes would grow upon thorns, as that virtue would flourish on any other stock, than that of religion. And is it possible to find a religion, which

contains a collection of laws, a system of truths, and ordinances so friendly to virtue, and so powerfully efficacious to cherish and extend it, as the religion of the gospel? Even infidels acknowledge the superior purity and perfection of gospel precepts, the mildness and liberality of that virtue, which they enjoin, and the majesty and energy of those motives, by which they enforce it.^c These precepts and motives operate powerfully to purify the springs, and to soften the rigor of civil government; they persuade and impel the heart of the magistrate to the love and practice of wisdom, justice, and christian patriotism, by raising his attention to an all-perfect Sovereign, in whose presence all earthly distinctions are equalized; in whose view, pride, injustice, and cruelty, are infinitely odious and criminal; righteousness, purity, and lenity, exceedingly amiable and laudable, and at whose tribunal they shall finally receive an everlasting recompense. At the same time the precepts and motives of this religion allure and constrain the heart of the subject to that reverence for the laws and ministers of government, and to that justice, fidelity, and benevolence toward his fellow-citizens, which most effectually promotes social har-

mony and happiness : they guard him in public, they watch him in secret, to deter him, not only from the *deeds* of covert wickedness, but even from those *passions* and *imagination*s, which, if indulged, might terminate in works of impiety and unrighteousness.

THE mild influence of christianity softens the horrors of war, and humanizes the ferocity of courage ; while it animates the virtuous warrior to pursue the bloody conflict with invincible spirit and bravery to the point of victory, it there sets bounds to his career, disposes him to spare the vanquished enemy, and to console the calamity of defeat and captivity with the meek and generous language and treatment of sympathy and beneficence.

THAT a contrary spirit of licentiousness, discord, and persecution, has frequently and greatly deformed the beauty, and ruined the happiness of christian societies and nations, is acknowledged and deplored. The corrupt and restless passions of mankind, which too often pervert the best things to the vilest purposes, have prostituted the most pure and benevolent religion, which the world ever beheld, to a cloak of covetousness and hypoc-

rify, to an engine of ambition, impurity, and revenge. A false and fiery zeal has imagined it was doing GOD service by harassing and tormenting every sect, which differed from its own. A specious and preposterous charity indulgent to men of loose and dangerous principles and practices, has been eager to exclude from society, and brand with infamy those whom it stigmatized as puritans and fanatics, because they were not as liberal as itself. But such events, as they verify the truth of gospel predictions, so they furnish no solid objection against its divine original, or the purity and benevolence of its genius, its doctrines, or precepts. For will any presume to assert, that the gospel gives the smallest encouragement to licentiousness, intolerance, or cruelty ? No ; it forbids and opposes them with all the energy of divine authority, justice, and love.

WE add 5thly, that the gospel is adapted to prove a source of joy to mankind under that heavy burden of want, disease, and suffering, to which sin has subjected them.

ARE we then to expect that it will exert, as in the days of its first promulgation, a miraculous power to satisfy their desires, and to heal their sufferings and diseases ? No ;

but we are warranted to expect effects, in some respects, still more salutary and substantial : to expect that it will eradicate, or restrain those vicious principles and passions, which are the inexhaustible springs of human wants and miseries. That it will mortify that covetousness which impels the avaricious to worship the world, and to sacrifice their health, liberty, happiness, and salvation to this insatiable idol. That it will crucify those unbridled lusts and affections which consume the property, enfeeble the bodies, and destroy the souls of those who indulge them. That it will humble that pride, and correct those false and dangerous principles of honour, which are the causes of endless vexation, discord, and distress ; and will impress the hearts of men with a full conviction that it is infinitely more noble and generous to forgive injuries and affronts than to revenge them ; to despise the reproaches of a misjudging world, than, by attempting the vindication of character, and the acquisition of glory in single combat, to brave the laws of their country, pierce with exquisite anguish the tenderest sensibilities of nature, spurn the love, and defy the vengeance of their SAVIOUR, and their GOD.

WE are moreover to expect that the gospel of Christ will prove a source of support and consolation to the pious believer, under all the inevitable exigencies and calamities of life, by giving him just conceptions of the glory and government of God, and a cordial acquiescence in all the manifestations of his will and dispensations of his providence: that it will give him the joyful testimony of a pure, approving conscience, and a comfortable assurance that all his trials and sufferings are the merciful corrections of a most wise and gracious Father, who will bless them for the advancement and confirmation of his faith and holiness, and for increasing his preparation for the enjoyment of complete and everlasting blessedness: that however he be poor and destitute, yet he is rich in the possession of all things in the fulness of God through the all-sufficiency of Christ, and in the unsearchable treasures of his grace and glory. How often have the destitute, the dejected, and heavy laden fled for refuge to their gracious Redeemer, and found rest and peace to their weary souls? Under the fiercest storms of affliction and persecution the hope of the gospel is an anchor of the soul. The depth and darkness of an hor-

rible pit and a miry clay are not so profound and impenetrable as to exclude from the humble suppliant every glimmering prospect of deliverance, or forever to debar his eyes from the light of liberty, or his lips from the song of joy ! For if the high and the lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, will descend and dwell with the humble and the contrite, is it possible that they should not be revived and comforted by the presence and communion of a friend and Father so infinitely all-sufficient in power, wisdom, tenderness, and love ?

WE have only to add, that the gospel is a source of joy to the sincere believer under the prospect, the approaches, and the pangs of death. However the philosopher may affect, in the pride of his wisdom, to despise it ; however the warrior may lose, or brave its terrors in the fire and tumult of conflict, or the prospect of victory and glory ; or the martyr be transported above the dread and feeling of its formidable aspect, and cruel tortures by a consciousness of the rectitude and dignity of his cause, the presence of his God, and the expectation of a crown of heavenly blessedness ; yet, to the retired and contemplative mind, death is naturally cloth-

ed with forms of darknefs and difmay. From the dread of which to what can we flee for deliverance but to that gofpel, which brings life and immortality to light ? Are we oppreffed by a confcioufnefs of fin with the apprehenfion of appearing in the prefence of a fpotlefs Judge ? The gofpel prefents the moft animating hope of acquittance at his righteous tribunal. Are we diftrefled with a painful idea of being torn away from all our precious relatives and friends ? The gofpel encourages us to expect a blifsful union with angels and the fpirits of juft men made perfect ; to find a friend and a father in God ; to fee his face in peace, and drink in the moft ravifhing pleasures from the light of his countenance. Is it painful to bid an everlafting farewell to all the enjoyments of life ? The gofpel promifes an inheritance incorruptible, a manfion, a crown, a throne, a life of endlefs reft and glory in the prefence of Jefus Chrift. Are we mortified with the apprehenfion of committing our bodies to the deformity and corruption of the grave ? Our hearts may be cheered with the blifsful profpect of their refurrection to a ftate of heavenly ftrength, honour, and immortality ; of their transformation into a

likeness to the glorious body of our Redeemer, and shining like the brightness of the sun forever in the kingdom of his Father. And are not these exalted and everlasting benefits amply sufficient to counterbalance all the wants, labours and sufferings of life and death, and to evince the truth of our doctrine, that the gospel is adapted and designed to be a source of great joy to all who cordially believe and obey it ?

MAY we not then justly conclude the discourse with this general inference, which applies the subject to the present occasion, That if we are satisfied from knowledge, from faith, and especially from our own experience, that the gospel is indeed such a source of joy as has been represented, then it is our duty, our interest, and happiness, to diffuse the blessings of it, by all suitable means and exertions, through every division and habitation of the human race ? Such exertions must be highly pleasing and honourable to GOD our SAVIOUR ; for there is joy in heaven, joy in the presence of the angels, over one sinner who repenteth ; and if the conversion of *one* produces such joy in heaven, what gladness would result from the conversion of a multitude ? And if christians cor-

dially unite in the execution of a design which employs infinite power, wisdom, and love, have they not great reason to hope they shall be ultimately successful? The designs of GOD must prevail, and become finally triumphant. Happy those who have co-operated in the promotion of their success; they shall ultimately share in the honour and blessedness of their perfect accomplishment.

SHOULD we not therefore catch that spirit of heavenly compassion, which the gospel breathes toward human creatures, perishing in ignorance and wickedness, and zealously exert it in every warrantable method for their deliverance?

AND is not the condition of great numbers of our fellow-countrymen truly dangerous and deplorable? Removed into the uncultivated regions of our extensive country, subjected to labour, hardship, and, in a measure, to the want of those means of knowledge, piety, and happiness which *we* so abundantly enjoy, are they not in danger of degenerating into ignorance, vice, and barbarity, of becoming irreligious, disorderly, and miserable among themselves, useless, not to say pestilent, members of society, and finally outcasts from the kingdom of GOD? If then

our hearts are melted and expanded with the precious doctrines and blessings of the gospel, we shall be zealous and active to diffuse its light, purity, and happiness, among our distant brethren.

AND may not the members of this society, instituted for the propagation of the gospel, among the Indians and others, congratulate themselves on the honour and happiness of being engaged in a design, so dignified and benevolent? May they not expect, with a proportionable degree of confidence, the countenance and patronage of government, the assistance of the influential and opulent, and the good wishes and prayers of all, who acknowledge, who experience the truth, the joy, and the charity of the gospel? What though the evidences and prospects of success may not be so numerous and promising as fully to satisfy the wishes of the pious and the munificent, yet they should consider that former exertions for the conversion of the savages have not been wholly unavailing. If the harvest of converts has been comparatively small, yet has it not been sufficient to compensate all the expense and labour, which have been bestowed upon it? If the *value* of one soul is far greater than of all the treas-

ures and glories of the world, surely the *salvation* of *one*, and especially of a number, must be an ample recompense for all the arduous and expenfive means, which have been employed for its accomplishment.

AND from the measure of civilization, knowledge, and religion, still retained by our brethren in the new and distant parts of our country, and from the cheerfulness and gratitude with which they appear to accept and second the attempts, which have been made to increase the diffusion of christian knowledge and piety among them, the prospect of success is still more promising. But whatever the degree of this success shall finally prove to be, those who are sincerely engaged in the promotion of it will experience the superior pleasure of gratifying their own charitable affections, and a high satisfaction in the conscious sincerity of their intentions to honour their GOD, their SAVIOUR, and his religion, and to advance the temporal and eternal happiness of their human brethren. These pious and benevolent intentions, and the animating prospects of extending the blessings of salvation to millions of the human race, may be vast and unbounded. For these blessings are not limit-

ed to any period of time, or description of people. The divine commission : “Go teach all nations ; go preach the gospel to every creature,” still retains its gracious and sacred authority. The declarations, the promises, the benefits of endless life and happiness may be proclaimed with perfect sincerity not only to the learned, the opulent and the polished inhabitants, of civilized countries, but to the swarthy African, the plundering Arab, the roving Tartar, and the wandering Savage who traverses the wilds of America, from the desert plains of Patagonia to the dreary mountains of the frozen pole : and if they will but listen to the joyful sound, embrace its proposals, and comply with its prescriptions, their hearts shall be melted and moulded to a spirit of meekness, piety, and love, and finally blessed with the enjoyment of everlasting peace, purity, and glory in the kingdom of God.

How elevating and delightful must be the reflection to the hearts of all, who are sincerely engaged in this benevolent design, that their efforts may ultimately spring up into such an exuberant harvest of blessings to their fellow-creatures, and be finally crowned with an immeasurable reward ?

FOR if the holy and munificent Judge of all human creatures and actions, will, at last openly applaud and recompense those who have ministered relief to the natural wants and sufferings of their neighbours, with what an emphasis of superior applause will he say to those who have been liberal and active in contributing spiritual food and consolation to the hungry and perishing souls of sinners, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, for I was hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, and in prison, and ye visited me, and granted me comfort and relief; for in as much as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

A M E N.

NOTES.

NOTE [A.] p. 6.

THE time especially intended, was immediately after the flood, when mankind were not perverted and corrupted with error, and idolatry ; but it is probable that the apostle intends to suggest that the perfections of God are discoverable by his works, and that all might, from this source, obtain some just ideas of them, if they were disposed to attend with a humble, impartial, and fixed application.

NOTE [B.] p. 6.

THOSE who have been conversant with Roman authors will readily recollect, or easily find, the testimonies referred to by the preacher ; but the author principally intended is Seneca. Those who are able to read the works of this philosopher in his own language, and are disposed to examine the description which he gives of the human and the Roman character, and compare it with that of the apostle, may consult Seneca *de brevitate vitæ*, Chapt. 2d, 12th, 14th, and 16th ; and *de beneficiis* Libr. 3d, Chapt. 15, 16, Libr. 5th, Chapt. 15th and 17th.

For the satisfaction of the English reader, I will take the liberty to transcribe a passage or two from an abstract made by Sir ROGER L'ESTRANGE, in which he affirms, " that he has reduced all Seneca's scattered ethics to their proper heads, without any additions of his own, except such as were absolutely necessary for connecting them together." He introduces Seneca, declaring that, "*Some* are ungrateful to their own country ; and their country no less ungrateful to *others* ; so that the complaint of ingratitude reaches all men. Doth not the son wish for the death of his father ; and the husband for that of his wife ? But who can look for gratitude in an age of so many gaping and craving appetites, where all people take, and none give ? In an age of license to all sorts of vanity and wickedness ; as lust, gluttony, avarice, envy, ambition, sloth, insolence, levity, contumacy, fear, rashness, private discords, and public evils, extravagant and groundless wishes, vain confidence, sickly affections, shameless impieties, rapine authorized, and the violation of all things sacred and profane ; obligations are pursued with sword and poison ; benefits are turned into crimes ; and that blood most seditiously spilt, for which every honest man should expose his own. Those who should be the preservers of their country, are the destroyers of it ; and it is matter of dignity to

trample upon the government. The sword gives law, and mercenaries take up arms against their masters. Among these turbulent, and unruly motions, what hope is there of finding honesty or good faith ; mercy, modesty, or religion ?” L’Estrange’s Abstract, Boston edition, of 1792. If the reader wishes to see the sable picture completed, he may consult the same abstract, pages 132, 133, and 327.

NOTE p. 15, (*two lines from the bottom.*)

THE ministers of Boston, Doctors Cotton Mather, Colman, Sewall, Prince, and others, in what they call an attestation to Mr. Mayhew’s account of pious Indians at Martha’s Vineyard, given at Boston, June 14th, 1726 ; assert that “ twice seven years had not passed away, after the beginning of the Massachusetts Colony, before the renowned ELIOT, a good man, full of the holy Spirit, and moved by him, set forward the good work, “ *and the hand of the LORD was with him,*” and with a victorious labour he became master of the Indian language, and in that language preached to many villages of the savages ; until, by the blessing of God on his laborious diligence, many believed and were turned unto the Lord. The Indians being so successfully instructed in the word of truth and gospel of salvation, soon had schools erected among them ; and learning to read and write, this indefatigable servant of God, first of all, translated the Bible into their language ; and added a version of the Psalms in Indian metre, whereof they became skilful and graceful singers.” They further assert that the consequence of all this was, the forming of congregations, the collecting and establishing churches, and administering ordinances, in several villages of Indians, who attended upon them with apparent sincerity, constancy, and devotion. In this account of pious Indians, by Mr. MAYHEW, the reader may find such an history of the conversion, the pious and exemplary lives, and peaceful deaths of many of those people of both sexes, and of all ranks and ages, as will afford him a satisfactory conviction of their having imbibed the Spirit, enjoyed the comforts, and practised the duties of christianity, with a truly evangelical sincerity.

THOSE who have read Mr. David Brainard’s journal of the rise and progress of a work of grace among the Indians in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, will recollect the account he gives of the powerful and surprising influence of the gospel upon the minds and hearts of those savage people ; especially upon one who had been a noted conjurer, [pow wow] drunkard and murderer ; and who, like Simon Magus, “ gave out, that he was some great one, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, this man is the great power of God ;” but who became, not a pretended, but, apparently, a real subject of

the faith and holiness of the gospel ; a zealous defender, and practical preacher of the truth which he once attempted to obstruct and destroy. See Brainard's Journal, page 154, and 221.

NOTE [C.] p. 19.

LORD Bolingbroke, in the 5th vol. of his works, page 188, as quoted by Dr. Fuller in his "*Gospel its own witness*," acknowledges that, "the gospel is in all cases one continued lesson of the strictest morality, of justice, of benevolence, and of universal charity."

VOLTAIRE, quoted by the above author, in page 69 of his "*Gospel its own witness*," asserts that "wherever Society is established, there it is necessary to have religion, for religion which watches over the crimes that are secret, is, in fact, the only law which a man carries about with him ; the only one which places the punishment at the side of the guilt ; and which operates as forcibly in solitude and darkness as in the broad and open face of day." This cannot be affirmed with exact truth of any other religion but that of the gospel.

LORD Shaftsbury observes, that "whoever by any strong persuasion or settled judgment, thinks in the main, that virtue causes happiness, and vice misery, carries with him that security and assistance to virtue which is required"—or, "if he believes a God, dispensing rewards and punishments to virtue and vice 'in a future' life ; 'he carries with him still the same advantage and security ; whilst his belief is steady, and no ways wavering or doubtful.'" And although he labours to prove that this hope of reward and fear of punishment, has too great an influence on the mind, tends to increase the power of self love beyond all due bounds of proportion, and to swallow up all generous and benevolent principles and motives, yet he acknowledges, that, "if by the hope of reward be understood the love and desire of virtuous enjoyment, or of the very practice and exercise of virtue in another life ; the expectation or hope of this kind is so far from being derogatory to virtue, that it is the evidence of our loving it the more sincerely, and for its own sake." *Characteristics*, vol. 2, page 67 and 65.

Now if his Lordship would have conceded, as may be presumed he would, that the christian religion presents to the minds of men the clearest and strongest views and evidences of future rewards and punishments, and that the nature of these rewards and punishments, and the hope and fear which they excite, are such as he requires, and even admits to be conducive to the sincere and constant practice of virtue, then he acknowledges, implicitly at least, that this religion has a powerful influence to promote safety, order, and the happiness of society.

APPENDIX.

A PARTICULAR account of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, of its operations, and funds, was given at the close of the Discourse, preached before them by Dr. LATHROP, the last year. It is not necessary that it be here repeated.

THE permanent funds of the Society remain as stated by their Treasurer in his Report, published in the discourse just mentioned.* The General Court, willing to increase the means and usefulness of the Society, added *five hundred* dollars to their usual grant, making it a *thousand*, for the current year. This addition was made specially with a view to enable the Society to establish and support schools, in Maine, in places where the inhabitants are unable to educate their children. Beside this grant, *two hundred and fifty five* dollars, *twenty seven* cents, were collected after the delivery of the preceding Anniversary Discourse.

SUCH have been the means of the Society. They have employed them in supporting Mess'rs. MAYHEW, HAWLEY, and SERGEANT, who minister to Indian congregations, at Martha's Vineyard, Marshpee, and New Stockbridge. Five Missionaries also have been sent the past season to preach the gospel among that part of the inhabitants of Maine, who are either wholly destitute of, or but sparingly enjoy, the means of religion. *Four hundred* dollars have been expended in promoting school education for children, in new plantations ; and the same sum in books, for distribution ; such as Bibles, Testaments, Psalm books, Primers, Spelling books, Doddridge's Rise and Progress, Token for Children, Divine Songs, and a variety of other religious books and tracts ; a great part of which have been distributed by the Missionaries, and others, to whom they have been committed for that purpose.

FROM the Journals of the several Missionaries, and information received from other authentic sources, there is reason to believe that the efforts of the Society have been crowned with an encouraging degree of success. The labours of the Missionaries have been gratefully acknowledged ; the books have been received and read with avidity, and hopeful improvement, and the aid and encouragement given to schools has been peculiarly acceptable, and evinced that this method of benefiting that hardy and enterprising class of people, who are extending the settlement of our country, may be pursued on a larger scale with eminent advantage. Among the good effects of these exertions of the Society, are the preservation, as far as they have influence, of the good habits of these emigrants, formed in the places of their nativity, the advancement of christian piety, civil

* Total amount of funds, 23,417 Dolls. 36 Cts.—Annual income, 1,145 Dolls. 83 Cts.—

order, morality, and the establishment of churches, forming congregations, the administration of the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and exciting and cherishing dispositions and wishes among the people, permanently to enjoy the benefit of these and other good institutions.

THE Society learn with pleasure from their Missionaries, that there exists a general disposition among the people in the new plantations, according to their ability, to support schools and religious institutions; but their means are yet so inadequate, that the aid of the Society is peculiarly acceptable. A continued and increased attention to these hardy and useful citizens is so obviously promotive of the religious, moral, civil, and social interests of the Commonwealth, and so much for the pecuniary advantage of the proprietors of lands in this part of the State, that the Society confidently hope for the continued aid of the Legislature; and that the gentlemen who hold here large tracts of unsettled lands, will be induced, from the double motive of interest and benevolence, to contribute liberally to a purpose so laudable. The Society hold themselves pledged to a faithful use of all funds deposited in their Treasury. It is their pleasure to be the stewards and almoners of the Commonwealth, and of pious and wealthy individuals.

OFFICERS of the SOCIETY for the year ending MAY 1805.

Hon. James Sullivan, Esq.	<i>President,</i>	
Hon. Oliver Wendell, Esq.	<i>Vice-President,</i>	
Ebenezer Storer, Esq.	<i>Treasurer,</i>	
Rev. John Eliot, D. D.	<i>Vice-Treasurer,</i>	
Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D.	<i>Secretary,</i>	
Rev. Abiel Holmes,	<i>Assistant-Secretary,</i>	
Rev. John Lathrop, D. D.		} <i>Select Committee.</i>
Rev. Joseph Eckley, D. D.		
William Phillips, Esq.		
Mr. Samuel Salisbury,		
Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D.		

The following is a List of Members living, January 1st, 1805.

Rev. Thomas Barnard, D. D.
 Alden Bradford, Esq.
 Rev. William Channing,
 Hon. Richard Cranch,
 Hon. Francis Dana,
 Hon. John Davis,
 Hon. Thomas Dawes,

Rev. Joseph Eckley, D. D.
 Samuel Eliot, Esq.
 Rev. John Eliot, D. D.
 Rev. Nathaniel Emmons, D. D.
 Rev. Levi Frisbie,
 David S. Greenough, Esq.
 Rev. Abiel Holmes,
 Mr. David Hyslop,
 Rev. John Lathrop, D. D.
 Hon. Benjamin Lincoln,
 Rev. Joseph McKean, D. D. President of Bow-
 doin College,
 Rev. Jedidiah Morse, D. D.
 Samuel Parkman, Esq.
 Rev. Elijah Parish,
 Eliphalet Pearson, L. L. D. Hancock, Professor
 of the Hebrew and Oriental Languages, and
 the English Language,
 William Phillips, Esq.
 Rev. Eliphalet Porter,
 Daniel D. Rodgers, Esq.
 Mr. Samuel Salisbury,
 Ebenezer Storer, Esq.
 Hon. James Sullivan, Esq.
 Hon. Cotton Tufts, Esq.
 Hon. Dudley A. Tyng, Esq.
 Hon. Oliver Wendell,
 Rev. Samuel West, D. D.
 Mr. James White,
 Ebenezer Wight, Esq.
 Samuel Williams, L. L. D.
 Mr. William Woodbridge.

FORM of a BEQUEST, or LEGACY.

Item.—I give and bequeath the sum of _____ to
 the *Society for Propagating the gospel among the Indians and*
others in North America ; to be applied either to the general
 objects of the Institution, or to such particular purposes, con-
 sistent with those objects, as the donor may think proper.

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